

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

**NOTICE TO NURSERYMEN OF THE RELEASE OF TWO NEW OAKLEAF
HYDRANGEA CULTIVARS, 'RUBY SLIPPERS' AND 'MUNCHKIN'**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service, U.S. National Arboretum, announces the release of 'Ruby Slippers' (NA 74836) and 'Munchkin' (NA 73936), two new *Hydrangea quercifolia* cultivars. 'Ruby Slippers' and 'Munchkin' are the first releases of the hydrangea improvement program at the U.S. National Arboretum's McMinnville, Tennessee worksite, which is located at the Tennessee State University Otis Floyd Nursery Crop Research Center. Both releases were developed by Sandra Reed and are compact forms of oakleaf hydrangea, a shrub native to the southeastern U.S. They are well-suited for use as specimen plants, in mass plantings or in the shrub border. Because of their small size, they are particularly useful in small residential landscapes.

Hydrangea quercifolia 'Ruby Slippers' originated from a controlled cross between oakleaf hydrangea cultivars 'Pee Wee' and 'Snow Queen' which was made in 1998. 'Ruby Slippers' was selected for its compact plant habit and upright inflorescences that age to a deep rose color. It is a small shrub that has grown 3.5 feet high and 5 feet wide in seven years of evaluation in McMinnville, TN. In early summer, 'Ruby Slippers' is covered with 9 inch long inflorescences that are held upright above the foliage. Flowers open white, but quickly turn pale pink and then deepen to rose.


Hydrangea quercifolia 'Munchkin' originated from open-pollinated seed of the oakleaf hydrangea cultivar 'Sikes Dwarf' collected in 1997. 'Munchkin' was selected for its compact plant habit and upright inflorescences that age to a medium pink. It is a small shrub that has grown 3 feet high and 4.5 feet wide in nine years in McMinnville, TN. In early summer, 'Munchkin' produces abundant, 6.5 inch long inflorescences that are held upright above the foliage. Flowers open white and gradually turn medium pink.

Both cultivars are hardy in USDA zones 5 to 8 and can be grown in full sun or light shade. Plants are readily propagated in the nursery from softwood cuttings using 4000 ppm IBA, with rooting occurring within four to six weeks. 'Ruby Slippers' and 'Munchkin' both have been evaluated by cooperators in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Washington. These cultivars have not shown unusual features that would indicate potential invasiveness.

Plants were distributed to cooperating nurseries for evaluation in 2006 and 2007, and for stock increase in 2008. The U.S. National Arboretum does not have stock plants of 'Ruby Slippers' or

'Munchkin' available for general distribution but can provide a limited number of cuttings to interested propagating nurseries. The U.S. National Arboretum can also provide a list of propagating nurseries offering these plants for sale. Requests for this list should be addressed to: Dr. Sandra Reed, U.S. National Arboretum, 472 Cadillac Lane, McMinnville, TN 37110, or Sandra.Reed@ars.usda.gov. The names 'Ruby Slippers' and 'Munchkin' will be registered with the International Registration Authority for Hydrangea in accordance with the International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants, 1995. Genetic material of this release will be deposited in the National Plant Germplasm System where it will be available for research purposes, including development and commercialization of new cultivars. It is requested that appropriate recognition be made if this germplasm contributes to the development of a new breeding line or cultivar.

Signature:



Deputy Administrator, Crop Production and Protection
Agricultural Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

1/15/10
Date